

MILLER ASKS: WILL U. S. QUIT GUANTANAMO?

Calls on President to Inform Public

BY WILLIAM ANDERSON
(Chicago Tribune Press Service)

Washington, May 19--The Republican party's chairman today urged President Kennedy to tell the American public whether or not the administration is considering abandoning Guantanamo naval base in Cuba.

Rep. William E. Miller (N. Y.), the chairman, said in a statement that the President should either confirm or spike persistent reports the Pentagon has drafted a plan to withdraw from Cuba to Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.

He also called upon the President to make public whether or not the Russians are now building a heavily armed naval base on the northeastern tip of Cuba near Banes. "Such an installation might in effect, neutralize Guantanamo," Miller said.

Opposes Plan

Sen. Barry Goldwater (R., Ariz.), the conservative leader of the party, first suggested in public on April 26 that there is a possibility the Kennedy administration is considering giving up the base, which was acquired thru treaty.

Unconfirmed sources said the senator based his remarks on information given to him by Pentagon sources who oppose such a plan on the theory that it would appear to be giving in to Fidel Castro, the communist premier of Cuba.

Other Republicans, including Bob Wilson (Cal.), chairman of the House campaign committee, also have expressed fear of such a scheme.

Sen. Stephen M. Young (D., Cal.) said in a newsletter May 8 that he favored turning the base into a campus for the Organization of American States if the communist threat is removed from the island.

Cites Navy Build Up

Miller today said Young's plan to turn the base into a campus for the Organization of American States is a "serious conflict."

balloon when he recommended that under certain conditions Guantanamo should be abandoned." Miller noted that weight was being added to the reports by the proposal to improve naval facilities now at Roosevelt Roads.

The Pentagon has requested about 12 million dollars for this project. A House armed forces subcommittee has been investigating the request, and a Capitol hill source told THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE privately that he feared the appropriation request may be linked to a "Guantanamo deal."

The Senate preparedness subcommittee, headed by John Stennis (D., Miss.), after months in closed sessions gathering testimony, reported Thursday that at least 17,500 Russian troops remain in Cuba.

The four Democrat and three

Republican members of the committee were unanimous in their findings that the central intelligence agency and other groups in the administration made faulty evaluations of the Russian missile buildup.

Miller observed that "Sen. Stennis might just as well have been conducting his probe in Timbuktu, for all the action his warnings have thus far stirred at 1600 Pennsylvania av. His report, tho, serves to dramatize once again the gap between the existing Cuban danger and our nonexistent Cuban policy."

Finds 'Serious Conflict'

He added that a "serious conflict exists" between the Stennis report and what administration officials said in evaluations of Red military strength last fall.

"If we believe Sen. Stennis and his bipartisan group, we can only conclude that President Kennedy, Presidential Assistant McGeorge Bundy, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, and Undersecretary of State George Ball were deceiving the American people. Nevertheless, the report paints President Kennedy white and the CIA black."

Miller charged that the administration is following a "Polkanna Cuba policy, interpreting every development in its

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X-003-2 John STENNIS
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